

16 DECEMBER 1975

Bush Emphasizes Continuity of CIA

By Norman Kempster

Washington Star Staff Writer

George Bush does not plan to preside over a shake-up of the CIA.

Answering mostly friendly questions from members of the Senate Armed Services Committee yesterday, Bush stressed continuity rather than change, and left little doubt that he sees no defects in the agency that a few minor touches could not cure.

Barring an unexpected change in sentiment, the committee seems ready to vote speedy approval of Bush's appointment as the successor to CIA Director William E. Colby.

Sen. Frank Church, D-Idaho, who objects to the appointment on the grounds that the former Republican national chairman is too political for the CIA post, hopes to enlist additional opponents with an appearance before the committee today.

BUT IT APPEARS that no more than four of the 16 members of the committee are ready to vote against Bush.

Making his first appearance on Capitol Hill since he was named U.S. envoy to China a little more than a year ago, Bush made it plain he would oppose any dramatic changes in the way the CIA does business.

He refused to rule out CIA backing for coups against foreign governments; he said the agency should not have to inform Congress in advance of covert efforts to manipulate the politics of other countries; and he said the United States cannot afford to be squeamish about its espionage because it must deal with "some pretty ruthless people."

Bush said some recently disclosed activities of the CIA were "outrageous and morally offensive." While insisting the abuses "must not be repeated," he said Colby already had taken action to prevent them so not much more would be required.

"wanton" exposure of CIA activities and suggested that attacks on the agency damage the national interest.

"FRANKLY, many of our friends around the world and some who are not so friendly are wondering what we are doing to ourselves as a nation as they see the attacks on the CIA," Bush said in phrases that were reminiscent from some of the recent speeches of Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger.

"Some must wonder if they can depend on us to protect them if they cooperate with us on important intelligence projects," Bush said. "In something as sensitive as intelligence they frankly hope we don't go so far that we kill off an important asset that they themselves and the free world vitally need for their own security."

Bush met head-on the complaints that he is too political to head the CIA. He said he has no apologies for his four years as a Republican House member from Texas and two years as GOP national chairman.

Bush said he would not engage in any sort of political activity while CIA director, but he refused to take himself out of the running for the Republican vice presidential nomination next year.

"I CANNOT in all honesty tell you that I would not accept" the second spot on a ticket headed by President Ford, Bush said.

"I do not think any American should be asked to say he would not accept," Bush said. "To my knowledge, no one in the history of this republic has ever been asked to renounce his political birthright as the price of confirmation of any office."

Bush said he would not seek the vice presidential nomination. "But no one really runs for that nomination anyway. The presidential nominee traditionally